

Dear Representative Bye, Representative Walker and Honorable Members of the Appropriations Committee,

I am writing to let you know how disappointed I am about the Governor's education budget. I have worked most of my career in New Britain and most years (out of 20) we have worked in a deficit. Our students have the best we can give but the facts are New Britain students do not get near what most other students receive in our DRG. In 2013 -14 New Britain was ranked 157<sup>th</sup> the in per pupil expenditures at \$12,842 - while the State average was \$15,180 and our DRG I average was \$16,027. Within our DRG four cities receive a higher per pupil allocation - Hartford, New Haven, Bridgeport and Windham. It is true that the State funds two thirds of our budget - however, our students are among the neediest children in the State. They need more. Equity is not everyone receiving the same, it is receiving what you need. Our children, the majority of whom come from poverty (free/reduced lunch approx. 79-80%) need more not less. We must be properly equipped to close the achievement gap (opportunity gap, accessibility gap, resource gap). New Britain's children are our future and it is imperative that we give them the same opportunities to be successful members of our society. A good education is the best way to ensure that our society continues to be productive, creative and supportive so all of us can have a better life.

New Britain for some reason, is considered a suburb in the Sheff/ONeil case. Hartford has been able to build brand new schools, CREC schools have exploded within Hartford and the surrounding communities and charter schools continue to be created. All with what appears to be a very lopsided increase. Magnet school and charter schools have received increased funding of 68% while the general education of our Connecticut public school students have received an 8% increase. Many of the Hartford magnet schools have given Hartford students opportunities, which I applaud – but what about opportunities for our New Britain public school students? Unfortunately, for all of the sending districts, we have to pay tuition to CREC, pay for related services and supports in magnet and CREC schools for our New Britain students and that takes precious funding from our core services and supports.

New Britain also has many students at magnet and CREC schools. We pay a lot of money for tuition, pupil services and bussing to CREC and magnets. We do not get to monitor the education our students are receiving, yet, we as the nexus, are responsible for ensuring that all IEPs and 504s are implemented with fidelity. It is very difficult to support, supervise and monitor students when they are in other towns.

Many of our families really want to stay in their community of New Britain. They like their neighborhood schools however, some feel compelled to go elsewhere because of the large class sizes we have, the lack of brand new schools with new books, technology and longer days with more enrichment activities. Our families want the best for their children and new schools, better facilities and more after school opportunities are very tempting.

We in New Britain also want more new and renovated schools, new books and resource materials, increased technology, and many more extended day opportunities for our students. If we are flat funded this year (the city cannot afford more and we are flat funded from ECS funds) we will be at a \$5.3 million deficit. Charter schools and magnet schools get that 68% increase. Really? We have the most improved school in the Commissioner's Network, DiLoreto Magnet School. We have 5 turnaround schools that are showing increases in attendance, student academic performance and behavior, yet without more support, we will not be able to maintain our positive trajectory because we will have to cut teachers, social workers, secretaries, paraeducators and administrators. This is not fair to the 10,500

students who look to us every day for a brighter future, having the right to read on grade level by the end of 3rd grade, to learn about their community and dream about going to college and making a difference in our community.

Please reconsider the way monies are used to support education in Connecticut. New Britain is a very poor community and is working hard at pulling ourselves out of a brutal loss of manufacturing businesses, community businesses and yet, we still have pride in our multicultural community. The poverty level is 80% - our children are your children. They live in Connecticut and you can make the difference in all of our lives.

Thank you for your attention to this very important issue.

Dr. E. Ann Carabillo  
Chief Academic Officer  
New Britain Board of Education

New Britain for some reason, is considered a suburb in the Sheff/ONeil case. Hartford has been able to build brand new schools, have the opportunity to have CREC schools within their boundaries that their children can attend. Many of the magnet schools have given Hartford students opportunities. Unfortunately, some of those schools are not Hartford's and the Hartford Board has to pay tuition. New Britain also has many students at magnet and CREC schools. We pay a lot of money for tuition, pupil services, bussing and our families really want to stay in their community. They feel compelled to go elsewhere because of the large class sizes we have, their children do not have the same brand new schools with new books, technology, longer days with more enrichment activities but they want the best so they send them out.

We in New Britain also want that for our students. If we are flat funded this year ( the city cannot afford more and we are flat funded from ECS funds) we will be at a \$5.3 million deficit. Charter schools and magnet schools get a 68% increase. Really? We have the most improved school in the Commissioner's Network, DiLoreto. We have 5 turnaround schools that are showing increases in attendance, student academic performance and behavior, yet without more support, we will not be able to maintain because we will have to cut teachers, social workers, administrators. This is not fair to the 10,500 students who look to us everyday for a brighter future, having the opportunity to read by the end of 2nd grade, to learn about their community and dream about going to college and making a difference in our community.

Please reconsider the way monies are used to support education in Connecticut. New Britain is a very poor community and is working hard at pulling ourselves out of a brutal loss of manufacturing businesses, community businesses and still have pride in our multicultural community. The poverty level is 80% - our children are your children. They live in Connecticut and you can make the difference in all of our lives.

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